

JAN 23 1956

Mr. Harland Bartholomew
Chairman
National Capital Planning Commission
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bartholomew:

Thank you for your letter of 16 December 1955 with which you transmitted (1) the report and recommendation prepared by a Committee of the National Capital Planning Commission, and (2) a report and recommendations of the National Capital Regional Planning Council, together with statements of certain local planning agencies.

I am, of course, disappointed in the adverse action taken by the National Capital Planning Commission in a vote of 6 to 5 against our proposal to locate the headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency at Langley, particularly in view of the earlier action of the National Capital Regional Planning Council to approve of the Langley site by a vote of 5 to 3.

Members of my staff and our consultants have carefully reviewed the reports you have submitted, together with the accompanying recommendations, and it is requested that your Commission review further our proposal to establish a new headquarters for the Central Intelligence Agency at Langley, the most suitable site that we have found and the one which will best enable us to carry out the important mission that the Congress of the United States has entrusted to us.

Our authorization and appropriation were obtained with the clear understanding that while we were exempted from "dispersal" we would at the same time definitely not locate in the District of Columbia but, rather, on the fringe of the metropolitan area of greater Washington. It is important to us to have the Agency headquarters situated on the west side of the Potomac in order to conform with emergency measures that already have been taken.

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Other major factors that were taken into consideration in our report to you included the accessibility of the site to several key points, generally in the Northwest District of Columbia and adjacent Virginia areas as well as accessibility or convenience to the homes of the majority of the Agency personnel.

We recognize the high residential value of the area surrounding the Government-owned reservation of 749.5 acres at Langley. We would wish to keep this surrounding area as it is, for to do so would better suit our own requirements for a semi-rural setting for the CIA headquarters.

For reasons heretofore given, we believe that the character of the surrounding lands may be preserved for residential use as "a community of low density, single family houses." There is no material evidence that our development would eventually disrupt the entire community and require residential densities of land use and commercial development of a nature not dreamed of when the long range plans for the development of Fairfax County were drawn up.

In our representations to the Commission we indicated clearly that approximately 75 per cent of the automobiles (3,000 cars) going to and from the Langley site would use the proposed George Washington Memorial Parkway; approximately 25 per cent of the automobiles (1,000 cars) of residents of Virginia would use the west entrance to the Reservation from Route 123. This means that the large majority of the CIA employees would enter and leave the site on the Potomac River or Parkway side of the Reservation and thereby have little or no contact with the surrounding community. We shall provide attractive cafeterias in the development for our employees so that there will be no need for them to leave the Reservation during the luncheon recess; in other words, there will be no need for shops and for other commercial development on the periphery of the Reservation to serve our employees; in fact, we would prefer none.

As we see it, this proposed development of ours at Langley is not an ordinary type that planners may place in a category which fits the pattern of other concentrations of people brought together for eight hours a day. The proponents and the objectors to the use of the Langley site for the CIA headquarters have expressed their views with respect to the nature of the impact of this development upon the surrounding areas. We believe that this is a very special problem and, as such it is our considered judgment that the CIA can use lands already owned by the Government in the manner we have described so that the presence of this Agency at Langley will become an asset rather than a liability to the surrounding community.

we shall lend every possible aid to this end, and, in these circumstances, we believe that the result will be acceptable to the large majority of persons who, for one reason or another, have expressed an interest in this matter. The fact that the officials of the County and a substantial majority of the people of the County desire to have us located at the Langley site seems, in a large measure, to prove our point. I am sure that you are aware of the results of the poll taken by Congressman Broyhill which indicate that 73.3 per cent of the voters of Fairfax County favor locating CIA at Langley with only 17.9 per cent opposing it, and 8.8 per cent having no opinion. It is also significant that each of the seven magisterial districts heavily favor locating CIA at Langley and in the Leesville District, which includes Langley, voters favor this site by a 1789 to 517 margin.

The prognostications with respect to the result of "impact" are largely conjectural. I believe that our argument is predicated upon realistic observations that fit into the very special situation which involves the proposed move of the CIA to Langley. We see no reason, for example, why the present zoning is necessarily "susceptible to successful downgrading by determined speculative interests," or that the location of CIA at Langley will necessarily "stimulate urban developments with explosive and detrimental force in violent conflict with the Master Plan." The area surrounding the Government Reservation at Langley will develop more houses, whether or not the CIA is situated there. I say this because the area is not distant from the City of Washington and with the arterial improvements and the installation of the approved sewer lines in the Pimmit Run water shed, growth is inevitable. Both of these improvements were planned long before CIA contemplated going to Langley. Any "impact" resulting in a rise in land values when forcing "zoning and regulatory changes, to permit high cost improvements, residential and commercial, in order that the tax increases would be sufficient to carry the burden of improvements," will be because of the normal development of the area which was already preparing for an increased population long before the CIA project at Langley was considered. The CIA contemplates paying the prevailing rates charged by the local municipalities and by the private utility corporations for services provided. Is it not true that the five year old Master Plan (Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital and its Environs) is a guide, and as such must be reviewed periodically to adjust its sights to new times, conditions and the needs of the Community? No doubt there will be changes, for no Master Plan can remain static in the light of the changes that are taking place now and that will take place even without CIA at Langley.

It interested me to note that the 1950 Comprehensive Plan shows a "decentralized government center" at the Langley site, and in view of the minimum relocation of Agency personnel residence which we anticipate, it would seem to us to be an eminently appropriate site for the use we propose.

Our consultant's report, dated 25 October 1955, together with their supplemental letter dated 12 December 1955, which I have endorsed, clearly sets forth the problem with respect to the means of access to and from the Langley site. We have continued our studies and we do not concede that "large sums of money are necessary to provide access to the site;" on the contrary, we are convinced that the Parkway, which must be constructed from its present terminus to the Langley site, the improvements of that section of Route 123 between the artery and the junction with Route 193 at Langley, and the planned improvements to the Key Bridge already under contract are the only arterial improvements necessary to place access to this site on relatively the same level as at other sites suitable for the operation of the Agency's proposed headquarters. Even with these improvements I am convinced that no other location that we know of will provide as satisfactory a means of access as does the Langley site. These three improvements, together with a number of other proposed arterial developments, ultimately will be required whether the CIA goes to Langley or not; most, if not all, of these were envisioned long before Langley was considered as a site for CIA. As you already know, the State of Virginia has indicated that it will improve the section of Route 123 between Langley and the George Washington Memorial Parkway Interchange, and the National Park Service, through the Bureau of Public Roads, will plan and construct the artery from its present terminus to the Langley site with funds to be made available by the CIA from its appropriation, as specified in the legislation.

Our consultant's supplemental letter, dated 12 December 1955, states, "It would be helpful to have certain other existing roads improved and to have Chain Bridge widened, as stated in our original report, but these will not be required until they come within the time scheduled for development either by the District of Columbia or by Fairfax County." Your Committee report includes the improvements to Chain Bridge, Canal Road and Warner Place as necessary. Prior to submitting their report, our consultant's had discussed the practical capacities of Chain Bridge and its approaches, as well as the capacities of other Potomac River bridges, with representatives of the District of Columbia Engineer Commissioner. You will recall that the results of a "point of origin and destination" study, as requested by the Engineer Commissioner for the District of Columbia, was forwarded to you on 9 December 1955. This study had particular reference to those employees living in the District of Columbia and

Maryland who might use Chain Bridge as the most direct route to the Langley site. It clearly shows that the anticipated traffic of our employees, who might use this bridge, plus the present traffic would not exceed the rated capacity of Chain Bridge. Since the improvements to Key Bridge are already under contract and the construction of the Constitution Avenue Bridge is assured, we still believe that as far as the impact of CIA traffic alone is concerned we can effectively use the Langley site with only those bridge and road improvements as outlined by our consultants.

The position taken by the Commission seems to have been based on two primary factors: the potential impact on the area and the extensive construction and improvements of access highways and bridges. I believe this position to be basically inconsistent, since the Commission apparently believes, on the one hand, that there will be a major relocation of our personnel resulting in a tremendous impact upon the area surrounding the Langley site, while, on the other hand, it declares a necessity for extensive improvements to highways and bridges predicated upon the assumption that the great majority of our people will remain where they presently reside, thereby forcing a vast highway construction program. Even if the highway construction and improvements your Commission has specified as minimum to provide access to the Langley site were necessary, we could not at the same time accept the premise that the area would be subjected to the impact which you visualize.

Your Committee raised questions concerning the availability of water supply and sewage disposal. I have assurances from the City of Falls Church that they will deliver an adequate supply of water to the Langley site. Our consultant's report, dated 25 October 1955, and their supplementary letter, dated 12 December 1955, set forth clearly the whole question related to sewage disposal. Fairfax County has agreed to provide an adequate plant to take care of their own needs and those of the CIA, and, as I have already indicated, it is anticipated that the Agency will pay the customary charges set forth in the County's rate schedule, together with the customary quarterly service charges.

In my judgment and that of our consultants, the Langley site is the best available one that will serve our purposes adequately. A site in the Northwest quadrant of the greater Washington area would be most convenient to the homes of the majority of the members of our staff. Therefore, the location of the CIA at Langley would eliminate the necessity of having our employees go through downtown Washington and other congested areas during the morning and evening rush hours. The Langley site is strategically situated in that it will be at one of the important crossroads on the proposed Outer Loop. I must consider the site selection problem from a long

range point of view with due consideration of the interest and requirements of CIA as well as the interest of the Washington Metropolitan Area Comprehensive Plan.

As you know, we have considered this matter with you since February of 1955, and I am appreciative of the time and consideration which the Commission has given to it. However, unless I can make a final decision at a very early date as to the location of the building so that preliminary plans and cost estimates can be presented to the Congress during this session, I am fearful that the entire project may be delayed for at least another year. Accordingly, may I request that the Commission reconsider this matter at its February meeting and make its final report as soon thereafter as possible. We and our consultants, Messrs. Clarke and Rapuano, stand ready at any time to assist in any possible way. While no additional formal presentation seems to be necessary, I believe that it would be beneficial to have Messrs. Clarke and Rapuano, and representatives of this Agency, present at your meeting in order to try to answer any questions which the Commission may wish to ask. I, of course, leave this entirely to your judgment.

Sincerely,

15/
Allen W. Dulles
Director

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